

ITALY'S IMPACT ON THE FOUNDING FATHERS AND THE FORMATION OF THE UNITED STATES



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The American Revolution is a defining event in the nation's history. It established the United States as a sovereign nation, free of British control, and it created a new society, which, although not perfect, nonetheless became a model for other nations to follow.

The American Revolution gave birth to a republic, a government centered around the interests of ordinary people, as opposed to the interests of kings and aristocrats. The struggle for independence and the American Revolution created American national

identity; the idea of a shared history, culture, and experiences; and a common destiny. Finally, the American Revolution established certain ideals around which the nation would be organized; namely liberty, equality, natural and civil rights, and responsible citizenship.

America's founders did not invent these ideas. In fact, many can be traced back centuries to ancient Greece, Rome, and to the political thinking of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. Although the American Revolution did not create a truly free society, one that was absent of social injustice, oppression, and exploitation, the nation's founders were nonetheless radical in what they envisioned.

America's Founding Fathers—the revolutionary leaders John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and George Washington—oversaw the War of Independence and created a framework of government. The Founding Fathers stood upon the shoulders of many philosophers who also valued liberty and independence. For instance, our present system of a government divided in three branches—legislative, judiciary and executive—comes from French Enlightenment philosopher Charles Montesquieu. Another important inspiration for the Founding Fathers was English philosopher John Locke, also known as “the father of liberalism,” who conceived that all people have the right to pursue “life, liberty and property.” Thomas Jefferson rephrased his writings in the Declaration of Independence as all people have the right to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

Among the philosophers who inspired the Founding Fathers were six men from what is now Italy: Filippo Mazzei, Cesare Beccaria, Gaetano Filangieri, Niccolò Machiavelli, Marcus Cicero, and Marcus Cato. They were not only major influences in the course of the American Revolution, but ultimately helped establish the United States as an independent nation. They championed the notion that every individual possesses inherent rights, liberties, and freedoms, while emphasizing the indispensable role of law and government in upholding peace and preventing disorder. These ideas remain central to modern American values, sparking ongoing debates and reflecting the enduring impact of Italian political thought.



In the following sections, we will explore the ideas and contributions of each of these philosophers, examining their theoretical and practical impact on the formation of the United States as an independent nation.

CATO THE YOUNGER



An important yet often overlooked figure who had a profound impact on early American political thought is Marcus Porcius Cato “Uticensis”, more commonly known as Cato the Younger, a Roman statesman born in 95 BC. He is considered an honorary founder of the American nation for his contributions to the core values and beliefs of a constitutional republic. Cato believed that virtue and morality were invaluable to society. He followed the ancient Greek school of knowledge known as Stoicism, which upheld virtue and reason as the highest form of public good. Living a life of moderation and wisdom was critical to this type of thought. Although he was wealthy, Cato was critical of luxurious lifestyles and chose to live as the common person did. He walked rather than be carried or transported by horse as was common for a person of his economic means. Cato was a republican at heart, who believed in placing the public good over personal agendas. The pursuit of a virtuous and moral life was at the core of

his personal beliefs, which would propel his most infamous endeavor in opposing the tyrannical rule of Roman general and ruler Julius Caesar.

America’s Founding Fathers came to think of Cato as a model of public and private virtue. Echoing Cato’s sentiments, they believed that virtue was central to a good and stable government. He became an inspiration to the soldiers fighting in the American Revolution, regenerating and renewing their desperate spirits.

Cato was a particular influence on George Washington. As he faced challenges on the battlefield, Washington used Cato’s experiences to lift the morale of his weary troops. In Washington’s eyes, Cato was a man of principle—the last person standing when the Republic of Rome fell. He was incorruptible; his vote could not be bought or sold. Cato did good for the sake of doing good.

Cato’s influence extended to other noteworthy figures in American history, including Patrick Henry and Abigail Adams. Henry’s iconic quote, “Give me liberty or give me death!”, which Washington delivered during the Second Virginia Convention on March 23, 1775, and which was instrumental in rallying Virginian troops for the Revolutionary War, drew inspiration from Joseph Addison’s play, *Cato, A Tragedy*. Remarkably, *Cato* emerged as a highly acclaimed play and the longest-running of the eighteenth century.

Additionally, Abigail Adams, wife of John Adams, signed her letters to her husband under the name “Porcia,” who was Cato’s daughter, showing her interest in ancient republican political thought.

The simplicity and authenticity of Cato’s life, coupled with his strong belief in morality, inspired the Patriot cause and encouraged Americans of the eighteenth century to embrace such values in their pursuit of establishing a country of moral righteousness and ethical consciousness.

MARCUS CICERO



Born in Arpino, Italy, near Rome in 106 BCE, Marcus Tullius Cicero was a statesman, scholar, and lawyer whose works examine the Roman Republic. He was an avid supporter of the republic's ideals, such as having the interests of all citizens represented in the government, from royalty to the common people. He also emphasized the importance of abiding the law, respecting private property, and refraining from unnecessary violence. Thus, Cicero's writings had a major impact on the Founding Fathers. According to Cicero, a person's education and the ability to speak and articulate ideas was integral to society. He is remembered as an excellent public speaker.

As a Roman statesman and a devoted loyalist to the Roman Republic, Cicero fought for republican values and beliefs, including the promotion of natural rights and an emphasis on the public good rather than personal interests and agendas. From his perspective, laws and liberty were required for a completely just state, with the people holding supreme power. Nevertheless, Cicero also embraced beliefs that seem contradictory to this ideology. He supported forms of government that resembled aristocracy and believed pure democracy was the worst form of government. In many ways, the Founding Fathers echoed Cicero's sentiments. They feared mob rule and violence, and created a representative form of democracy (rather than a pure democracy) to avoid political unrest. Although at first glance such ideas of Cicero's seem paradoxical, there remained some sensibility in his beliefs. According to Cicero, a mixed government was the ideal system, since it provided a role for everyone. The balancing and blending of democracy, monarchy, and aristocracy was optimal for Cicero, since it was representative of the Roman Republic itself. Such ideas would have a tremendous impact on the Founding Fathers.

In his book, *A Defense of the Constitutions*, John Adams drew upon the theory of mixed government formulated by Cicero. These ideas were gradually implemented into both the American and British constitutions. Madison and Hamilton also applied parts of Cicero's mixed government theory in their works. Hamilton was fond of Cicero's idea of the role of political leaders in keeping society on the right track, and fulfilling the agendas of the common good. Furthermore, Hamilton, like Cicero, sought a republican government that promoted liberty and resisted tyranny. By way of Cicero's work, America's Founding Fathers came to perceive the Revolution as an event that unveiled a growing emphasis on the importance of character among colonists.

Thanks in part to Cicero, the Founding Fathers and colonists began to perceive the Revolution as more than a physical fight for independence. The experience encouraged a sense of solidarity and loyalty. These, too, were important outcomes of the war effort.

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI



Many of the ideas that inspired the American colonists to seek independence from Great Britain can be traced to the Renaissance (1420–1527), a period of artistic, intellectual, and cultural revival precipitated by the rediscovery of ancient Greek and Roman works. The Renaissance stimulated the expansion of trade networks, the rise of interactions between geographically distant regions, and continued artistic and technological innovation. Over time, these developments permeated Western Europe and eventually spread across the world.

Author, diplomat, and philosopher, Niccolò Machiavelli was one such Renaissance theorist who influenced the Founding Fathers, and had a major impact on the foundational ideas of the United States.

Machiavelli concerned himself with the political context of his time, especially in the political structures and systems of the Florentine state. His ideas and writings revealed the issues that underlay Italy's political institutions, and reinforced the importance of reason and logic in a government. In an infamous and notable work, *The Prince*, Machiavelli embraced a realist attitude towards politics. He argued that political affairs and politics should be addressed rationally and pragmatically, rather than with unrealistic hypotheticals or assumptions.

Machiavelli's ideas surrounding the role of a republic served to explain how such systems could contribute to a more just and fair world. This included opposition to tyranny and anarchy, an emphasis on the common good, an operation of checks and balances, and the promotion of democratic values (i.e., free and fair elections, liberty, etc.). Machiavelli's explanation of these fundamental ideas received praise from the American Founding Fathers, most notably John Adams. Adams praised Machiavelli for his realist approach to political theory and politics, and even recommended statesmen consult and follow his works.

Machiavelli's popularity comes from his idea of resisting the rule of tyrants and placing the well-being and security of a nation at the forefront of a leader's agenda. *The Prince* has also been widely criticized for its emphasis on amoral tactics, such as lying, deception, and the use of fear as a tool of control. The adjective "Machiavellian" is still used and refers to people who employ manipulative and scheming tactics.

Aside from his often authoritarian beliefs, Machiavelli was also concerned with the process through which to form a stable and unified political community. He rejected ideas of a predetermined pathway to a utopia (perfect society) and ever-lasting happiness. Instead, he concluded that humans had to adapt to evolving circumstances and situations to attain a sense of order and unity. According to Machiavelli, structure and order were crucial to maintaining order, preventing acts of lawlessness, or discouraging behavior that could threaten the fabric of society. The Founding Fathers would embrace some of these beliefs.

Machiavelli is also acknowledged as the “father” of **modern constitutionalism**. At the core of modern constitutionalism is the idea that rulers and leaders will adopt systems and regulations that are conducive to creating the most effective form of government. Modern constitutionalism is strongly connected with ideas of **republicanism**, a government that emphasizes the participation of citizens for the common good of the republic. He is also responsible for the revival of ancient political theories in the modern world, which included the introduction of **classical republicanism** and the application of reason to the formation of government and its associated structures. Justice and the public good were priorities for Machiavelli.

FILIPPO MAZZEI



Filippo Mazzei was born in 1730 in what is now Tuscany, Italy. He worked as a wine merchant in London and studied medicine in Florence before sailing to the American colonies in 1773 at the encouragement of Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, who were impressed with his agricultural operations and urged him to come to the colonies. Mazzei first arrived in Virginia with the intent of establishing a vineyard and producing olive oil. His arrival coincided with a critical moment in the American Independence movement. Mazzei's neighbor in Virginia was Thomas Jefferson, and the men developed a close friendship. Mazzei and Jefferson exchanged ideas frequently, and it was Mazzei who supplied what became the basis for one of the most famous lines of the **Declaration of Independence**: "*Tutti gli uomini sono per natura egualmente liberi e indipendenti (e) devono essere uguale all'altro nel diritto naturale,*" which translates to "All men are by nature equally free and

independent (and) must be equal to each other in natural law." From this, Jefferson formulated his most celebrated quote, "All men are created equal."

Mazzei was an ardent supporter of the colonies' liberation from the British crown and the advancement of American independence. He acted as an agent for the revolution and purchased arms for the war. Mazzei also had close ties to other Founding Fathers, including James Madison, James Monroe, and John Adams. Adams, in particular, had noticed not only Mazzei's dedication to the American colonies abroad, but also Mazzei's commitment to America's objectives and his support for creating a freer nation. The individual who Mazzei had the greatest influence on was Jefferson himself. Mazzei provided Jefferson with the framework necessary to help promote ideas of freedom, autonomy, and **sovereignty**, concepts central to the Revolutionary movement.

Jefferson embraced Mazzei's beliefs of freedom and equality, liberty, and **republicanism**, or the ideology of a government centered on civic participation in politics. Jefferson also translated Mazzei's writings into English as an effort to denounce British oppression of colonial America. Although Mazzei retired in Italy in 1792 and never returned to America, his impact helped shape the country America is today.

CESARE BECCARIA



Another chief influence on American founding principles was Cesare Beccaria, a criminologist and economist born in 1738 in Milan, Italy. Beccaria is most famous for his essay ***On Crimes and Punishments***, which was published in 1764. This work was particularly influential on George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, John Hancock, and Benjamin Franklin. In the essay, Beccaria calls for reforms to the penal system of colonial America, one that, in his eyes, was too harsh and cruel.

At the core of his proposals for reform was an emphasis on rehabilitation, in which the offender would receive treatment and aid with the intent that they would eventually be considered capable of returning to society. Beccaria promoted an anti-death penalty stance and was critical of capital punishment. His viewpoints provided a framework for American beliefs regarding justice, torture, and cruelty, which can also be found in the **Eighth Amendment** of the Constitution of the United States. Beccaria believed that punishment was a cruel and tyrannical act. Rather than

punish individuals, he asserted that providing incentives and rewards for moral and virtuous behavior would elicit better outcomes.

Rational thought and a sense of free will were central to the values and beliefs of Beccaria, like other **Enlightenment** thinkers and philosophers. He believed that such values could contribute to a more equitable and moral world. Beccaria's work would also impact the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of Independence. Beccaria remained committed to the belief that the purpose of punishment was to deter individuals from committing crimes and to maintain a safer and better community.

Beccaria also had a considerable influence on the **Second Amendment**, or the right to keep and bear arms. He voiced opposition to gun control laws, proclaiming that such beliefs were destructive to the general good. According to Beccaria in *An Essay On Crimes and Punishments* (1775), depriving individuals of their right to hold and use arms did not benefit victims. Instead, he reasoned, people became easier targets of criminals. Depriving individuals of arms would mean depriving them of a fundamental right and liberty, one that is ingrained into the Bill of Rights and the American Constitution.

Some of Beccaria's ideas were embedded in America's founding documents and its early institutions, as Beccaria's work had a profound influence on the independence movement.

GAETANO FILANGIERI



Gaetano Filangieri was an Italian jurist and philosopher born in the Kingdom of Naples (present-day Italy) in 1753. Filangieri earned Benjamin Franklin's admiration for his ideas on the nature of government and its goals and objectives as a system of leadership, rule, and order. Similar to Niccolò Machiavelli, Filangieri was a proponent of **republicanism**, a concept of government that emphasizes the public good and one in which citizens' civic and personal responsibilities are essential to ensuring a stable society and community. Filangieri also supported the idea that a fair government ruled for the benefit of people, rather than at their expense or to their detriment. In addition to his promotion of a more just and fair government, Filangieri emphasized the importance of natural human rights, including life, liberty, and the ability to possess property, echoing the ideas of John Locke. Founding Fathers John Adams and Benjamin Franklin also embraced these views. Filangieri initiated an exchange of letters between himself and Benjamin Franklin during an eight-year period between 1780 and 1788. He would also send Franklin a copy of his work, *The Science of Legislation*, which detailed modern constitutionalism, a concept introduced by Machiavelli. By bridging and synthesizing ideas

from both ancient and (what were then) modern times, Filangieri attempted to provide both his own explanation of how the government should conduct itself and his repudiation of political and economic abuses that had occurred throughout the world. The importance of Filangieri lies in his support for fundamental human rights, along with his strong connection with America's Founding Fathers. Many of his beliefs surrounding the formation of a better and more stable society remain more relevant than ever.

CONCLUSION AND SIGNIFICANCE:

From ancient Rome to the Enlightenment, social and political ideas from the Italian peninsula played a paramount role in making the United States. They served as an impetus to fight against economic and political oppression and provided the Founding Fathers with knowledge, insight, and vision for creating a more free and liberated nation.

ACTIVITIES

Activity #1: Scenario-Based (Individual or Group) Presentation Activity

You're an up-and-coming history scholar who has been invited to present to a large audience about the impact that Italian philosophers have had on the United States. Alone or in groups of three, create a Google Slides or PowerPoint presentation detailing the impact of at least two individuals mentioned in this curriculum. Include the following:

(1) the name of the philosopher; (2) a brief biography (where and when the person was born, interesting facts, main ways in which the philosopher influenced the Founding Fathers and the formation of the American nation); and (3) the lasting legacy of the individual (how their ideas, beliefs, and writings continue to shape our beliefs today).

Make sure to include at least five reputable sources and illustrate your presentation with images and media.

Activity #2: Analysis of Cicero

Read the following quotes from Roman statesman and scholar Cicero:

"It is the character of a brave and resolute person not to be ruffled by adversity, and not to desert their post."

"The purpose of education is to free the student from the tyranny of the present."

"It is difficult to persuade mankind that the love of virtue is the love of themselves."

"It is a great thing to know our vices."

"We must not say that every mistake is a foolish one."

Choose one of the five quotes and in a well-developed paragraph, provide an analysis of the quote. You are also welcome to choose another quote from Cicero that has meaning to you, if you prefer. When writing your explanation, consider the following: (a) What is Cicero saying in simple/modern terms? (b) Why would Cicero be interested in such ideas and topics? (c) What connections might there be between Cicero's quote and the beliefs and values of the American Founding Fathers? (d) What is your personal reaction to the quote? (e) Why is such a quote/idea relevant today?

Activity #3: Text Based Questions

- (1) What values did Cato believe were most important to society?
- (2) What form of government did Cicero believe was the best and why?
- (3) What did Machiavelli mean when he said it is better for a ruler to be feared than loved? Do you agree or disagree? Explain.
- (4) What was the famous statement that Mazzei shared with Jefferson? In what document does this idea appear? What does it mean to you?
- (5) Explain Beccaria's views on punishment.
- (6) What were Filangieri's ideas surrounding the government? How should the government work according to him?

GLOSSARY

Ancient Rome: The Roman Empire is known to be one of the first republics in history. Although it had some periods of authoritarianism, particularly following the ascension of the dictator Julius Caesar, it remained a republic for several centuries. The empire included major democratic components from 509 BC to 27 AD, including a Senate, a constitution, and representatives of the lower classes, known as the “Council of the Plebeians.” This system provided a fertile ground for philosophical concepts that promoted freedom of expression, egalitarianism, and individual rights. Despite defending flawed practices such as slavery, Ancient Rome laid a solid foundation for the development of values that advocated liberty, the common good, and the separation of power among representatives. These concepts were also deeply valued by the Founding Fathers.

Classical Republicanism: A political theory developed in the Renaissance, originating from ancient Roman and Greek writers, which states that a government should preserve the rights of its citizens.

Declaration of Independence: Fundamental document of the United States that formally declared America’s independence from Great Britain. It was written and signed by Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Caesar Rodney, and William Paca, among others. The document was approved on July 4, 1776, by the Second Continental Congress.

Eighth Amendment: States that no excessive bail shall be required, nor any cruel or unusual punishment inflicted upon an individual.

Modern Constitutionalism: The idea that leaders/rulers will make decisions with the intent to form the best government possible, it strongly related to ideas of **republicanism**, including the promotion of the public good ahead of private interests, the separation of powers, the operation of checks and balances, and the creation of a more just and fairer world. The concept was introduced by Italian author and diplomat Niccolò Machiavelli.

On Crimes and Punishments: Essay written by Cesare Beccaria in 1764, detailing his proposals for the reformation of America’s legal frameworks and criminal justice systems.

The Renaissance: This historic period (1300–1600) was a time of cultural, artistic, political and economic “rebirth” in Europe. Following the Middle Ages, when most Europeans lived in feudal societies under strict religious and social norms, the Renaissance revived values of the classic Greco-Roman times, with a fresh emphasis on the concepts of republic and democracy. During this period, many philosophers, including Machiavelli, interpreted the “ideal government” as one that gave the public some power and rights while preventing the establishment of an overly strong leader. Furthermore, it was believed that public welfare should take precedence above self-interest. These concepts, in turn, spawned a newfound perspective on the relationship between the government and individual liberty. Thus, they served as inspiration for many of the ideas defended by the American Revolution.

Republicanism: Although the term “republican” is currently used in reference to the American political party, “republicanism” had a different meaning in earlier times. Historically, republicanism refers to the theory of government that supports a republic and emphasizes citizenship and the participation of citizens for the common good of the community.

Second Amendment: The right to keep and bear arms.

Sovereignty: Supreme legitimate authority and power within a state or defined territory.

CA CONTENT STATE STANDARDS

Social Science

6.7 (1, 2, and 8)

6.7: Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures during the development of Rome.

1. Identify the location and describe the rise of the Roman Republic, including the importance of such mythical and historical figures as Aeneas, Romulus and Remus, Cincinnatus, Julius Caesar, and Cicero.
2. Describe the government of the Roman Republic and its significance (e.g., written constitution and tripartite government, checks and balances, civic duty).
8. Discuss the legacies of Roman art and architecture, technology and science, literature, language, and law.

8.1 (2)

8.1: Students understand the major events preceding the founding of the nation and relate their significance to the development of American constitutional democracy.

2. Analyze the philosophy of government expressed in the Declaration of Independence, with an emphasis on government as a means of securing individual rights (e.g., key phrases such as “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights”).

8.2 (4 and 7)

8.2: Students analyze the political principles underlying the U.S. Constitution and compare the enumerated and implied powers of the federal government.

4. Describe the political philosophy underpinning the Constitution as specified in the Federalist Papers (authored by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay) and the role of such leaders as Madison, George Washington, Roger Sherman, Gouverneur Morris, and James Wilson in the writing and ratification of the Constitution.
7. Describe the principles of federalism, dual sovereignty, separation of powers, checks and balances, the nature and purpose of majority rule, and the ways in which the American idea of constitutionalism preserves individual rights.

11.1 (1 and 2)

11.1: Students analyze the significant events in the founding of the nation and its attempts to realize the philosophy of government described in the Declaration of Independence.

1. Describe the Enlightenment and the rise of democratic ideas as the context in which the nation was founded.
2. Analyze the ideological origins of the American Revolution, the Founding Fathers’ philosophy of divinely bestowed unalienable natural rights, the debates on the drafting and ratification of the Constitution, and the addition of the Bill of Rights.

12.1 (1 and 3)

12.1: Students explain the fundamental principles and moral values of American democracy as expressed in the U.S. Constitution and other essential documents of American democracy.

1. Analyze the influence of ancient Greek, Roman, English, and leading European political thinkers such as John Locke, Charles-Louis Montesquieu, Niccolò Machiavelli, and William Blackstone on the development of American government.
3. Explain how the U.S. Constitution reflects a balance between the classical republican concern with promotion of the public good and the classical liberal concern with protecting individual rights; and discuss how the basic premises of liberal constitutionalism and democracy are joined in the Declaration of Independence as “self-evident truths.”

12.10

Students formulate questions about and defend their analyses of tensions within our constitutional democracy and the importance of maintaining a balance between the following concepts: majority rule and individual rights; liberty and equality; state and national authority in a federal system; civil disobedience and the rule of law; freedom of the press and the right to a fair trial; the relationship of religion and government.

Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills 6-8

Research, Evidence, and POV (3 and 4)

3.Students distinguish relevant from irrelevant information, essential from incidental information, and verifiable from unverifiable information in historical narratives and stories.

4.Students assess the credibility of primary and secondary sources and draw sound conclusions from them.

Historical Interpretation (1 and 2)

1.Students explain the central issues and problems from the past, placing people and events in a matrix of time and place.

2.Students understand and distinguish cause, effect, sequence, and correlation in historical events, including the long-and short-term causal relations.

Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills 9-12

Chronological and Spatial Thinking (1)

1.Students compare the present with the past, evaluating the consequences of past events and decisions and determining the lessons that were learned.

Historical Interpretation (1 and 3)

1.Students show the connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments.

3.Students interpret past events and issues within the context in which an event unfolded rather than solely in terms of present-day norms and values.

ELA

Writing Standards 6-12 (1,4,8,9)

1.Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

4.Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

8.Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation including footnotes and endnotes.

9.Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research

Speaking and Listening Standards 6-12 (2,4,5,6)

2.Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.

4.Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically (using appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation) such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose (e.g., argument, narrative, informative, response to literature presentations), audience, and task.

5.Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements)

in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.
6.Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Language Standards 6-12 (4,6)

4.Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases.

6.Acquire and use accurate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.